

a representative of NAME be invited to address a future NAMHE Committee meeting.

This meeting focused particularly on the development of relations with sister subject associations and organisations. For example, it was agreed that SCUDD, SCODHE and other relevant subject associations be consulted about their admissions practices and about how they promoted their subjects nationally. Also, AHRC and CHEAD had invited NAMHE to join the AHRC Practice-Led Research Working Group, which would be a useful forum in which to expose NAMHE'S *Practice as Research* paper. The Committee noted how important it was to cement these relationships, as the shared power of the journals project had demonstrated. This shared power may well have prompted the inaugural AHRC Subject Associations meeting in April, which Professor Stephen Banfield attended on behalf of NAMHE.

The Chair reported that a meeting was to be convened between chairs of subject associations and the RAE panel chair and sub-panel chair, to consider the RAE draft criteria. It was agreed that he would invite comments on the criteria from the membership via jiscmail. It was also agreed that NAMHE would raise awareness within the subject that the consultation was happening and encourage departments to join NAMHE in order to have their say.

It was noted that new subscription rates, which differentiated between departments by number of FTEs, had been approved at the AGM and would be implemented in 2005-06.

## Subscriptions 2005-06

It was agreed at the Annual General Meeting on 3 May to introduce a new tiered system of membership subscriptions. For the first time, individual membership is introduced for those working in Music, but without a department.

The new subscription rates approved by the AGM for 2005-06 are as follows:

Individual membership	£30
Small dept membership (3 staff FTEs or less)	£60
Dept membership (4-10 staff FTEs)	£120
Large dept membership (more than 10 staff FTEs)	£200

Subscriptions are due on 1 October and invoices are being sent out now. Your invoice will be addressed to your NAMHE representative, unless the Administrator has been advised to send it to another contact in your department. Please do what you can to ensure that your invoice is paid promptly.

## The current NAMHE portfolio descriptors

### Research

Keeps under review all national trends relating to research and scholarship with an active watch on issues related to practice as research. Monitors activities of the AHRB/C, BA and RAE and responds to requests from such bodies for information and comment. Liaises with the other bodies (RMA, IAML, CUK) routinely consulted by government and its agencies.

### HE Learning and Teaching

Examines policies from funding councils and QAA with an impact on teaching and learning in music. Monitors the operation and impact of QAA activities. Responds to requests from funding councils and others for information on teaching and learning issues and for representation on working parties. Represents NAMHE on our subject association, PALATINE, and reports to the sector on any issues arising from the Higher Education Academy.

### External Relations

Seeks to maintain overarching control over relationships with key musical bodies (RMA, IAML, ISM, CUK) and to co-ordinate collaborative efforts, while acknowledging that other NAMHE groups will have cause to establish links with these bodies. Also establishes and preserves links with subjects with which music is grouped by such bodies as HEFCE, AHRB and BA (SCUDD, SCODHE and AAH), as well as other related subject groupings in English, History, Modern Languages, Law, Philosophy, Archeology etc.

### Pre-HE

Examines issues relating to progression from school-level into tertiary-level music; represents HE Music at government and national music education organizations and their meetings (DfES and DCMS through the National Music Education Forum, the QCA/SQA, the Music Education Council, National Association of Music Educators, Music for Youth, Youth Music and others)

### Infrastructure

Monitors issues relating to academic, professional and commercial networks underpinning the dissemination of learning, teaching and research in music. Links with external bodies such as IAML and the RMA, and examines questions relating to publishing, libraries, copyright and e-learning.

## And finally... dates for your diaries

Conference 2006 - RAE 2008: Strategy, Submission, Survival at the University of Wolverhampton on May 2nd 2006

The 2007 NAMHE Annual conference will take place on 8 May 2007 at Queens University, Belfast.



## Editorial

Welcome to the first *Newsletter* of 2005-6, and in another sense, a new beginning. We have applied for and received an ISSN number and since this is the first in a new series it was altogether easier to start from scratch. We also start again with a completely new website for the Association. We hope you will make use of this renewed and responsive medium of communication: we have, I think, seen the value over the past years of wider and more informed discussion within the subject community. The Committee trusts that you will find this website to be a valuable tool in the years ahead.

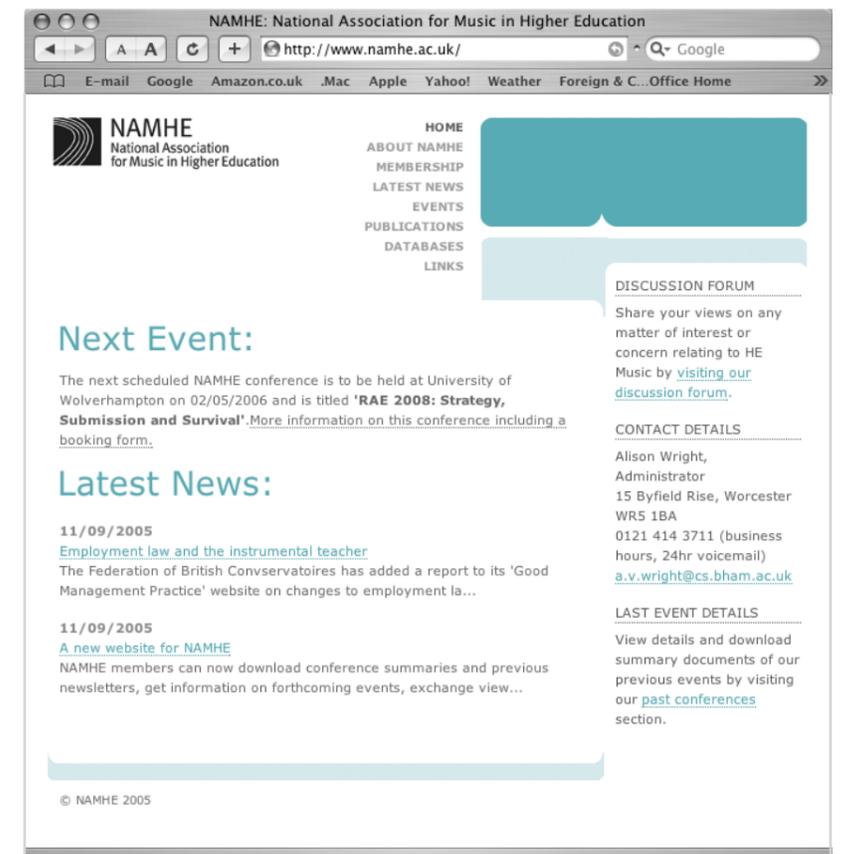
In this issue our secretary Amanda Bayley writes a report on the NAMHE conference which took place in May at Southampton. We are grateful to Amanda for undertaking this task: by no means as straightforward as it might seem distilling the collected wisdom of a day into a few thousand words. I am sure that those of you who were unable to attend the conference will find the summary helpful, and will be encouraged to attend next year's conference on a topic dear to our hearts - RAE 2008: Strategy, Submission, Survival! (See Mark Everist's Chair's Report for more details). Finally we also have committee summaries for the past two meetings, and information on the new subscription rates, for your attention.

Dr Richard McGregor, Editor  
St Martin's College, Lancaster

## The new NAMHE Website

Autumn 2005 sees the launch of NAMHE's brand new website at [www.namhe.ac.uk](http://www.namhe.ac.uk). NAMHE members will now be able to keep up with the latest opportunities and challenges facing the subject community, exchange views and participate in these debates, download newsletters and conference summaries, access information on forthcoming events and much more. The site will evolve over time in response to members' needs and feedback so do keep checking in!

Professor Geoff Smith  
Bath Spa University



The screenshot shows the NAMHE website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation menu with links for HOME, ABOUT NAMHE, MEMBERSHIP, LATEST NEWS, EVENTS, PUBLICATIONS, DATABASES, and LINKS. Below the menu, there is a section for 'Next Event:' which announces the next scheduled NAMHE conference at the University of Wolverhampton on 02/05/2006, titled 'RAE 2008: Strategy, Submission and Survival'. There is also a 'Latest News:' section with two recent articles: 'Employment law and the instrumental teacher' and 'A new website for NAMHE'. On the right side, there are sections for 'DISCUSSION FORUM', 'CONTACT DETAILS' (listing Alison Wright, Administrator), and 'LAST EVENT DETAILS'. The footer of the page includes the copyright notice '© NAMHE 2005'.

## Mark Everist, Chair of NAMHE comments:

The last six months have shown the degree to which government agencies responsible for the management of higher education have realised the importance of such subject associations as NAMHE in their work. HEFCE, which is responsible for the RAE, has brought learned societies and subject associations much closer into the process of research evaluation and – as the comments below suggest – this is likely to continue; and the AHRC – as it now is – is in constant dialogue with NAMHE over almost every aspect of its policymaking and implementation. Some of this consultation will be familiar to colleagues, since it also goes through HEFCE-funded institutions, although in those cases it is difficult to get a subject-specific voice heard amid the clamour of articulate (and in some cases simply louder) competitors. So when the AHRC specifically invited subject association representatives to meet earlier in the summer, it was an important step for NAMHE and the discipline, and we are delighted that this is going to continue on an annual basis. While this involvement is surely welcome, it represents a step-change in the level of activity for NAMHE's national committee, and a challenge, even in its enlarged form.

Many members of NAMHE will be aware of the consultative process over the RAE that has been going on all summer. By the time this *Newsletter* reaches you, the formal round of consultation (deadline 19 September 2005) will be complete. Over the summer, and together with representatives of the Royal Musical Association (RMA) and Conservatoires UK (CUK), I met twice with the chairs of Panel O (covering UOAs 63 Art and Design; 64 History of Art, Architecture and Design; 65 Drama, Dance and Performing Arts; 66 Communication, Cultural and Media Studies; 67 Music) and the chair of the UoA 67 Music sub-panel. These meetings proved very helpful in shaping the final version of NAMHE's response to the RAE 2008 draft criteria based on the comments we received from the membership. I am satisfied that the response that was received by HEFCE well represents the views of the association and is usefully informed by the advice we received from panel and sub-panel chairs. At the second meeting, it also became clear that NAMHE and its partner associations were to be called on as the sub-panels assemble their papers on working methods. Unlike the draft criteria, and the criteria themselves (due to be published in January 2006), these are *not* public statements, but the documents that will inform the assessment of outputs, environment and esteem. They will include the sort of detail that I know many colleagues were hoping would be included in the draft criteria (and in which we were largely disappointed). The method for recording NAMHE's input into this process is our 2006 Annual conference to be held at the University of Wolverhampton (2 May 2006) entitled:

### RAE 2008: Strategy, Submission, Survival

Both the chairs of the main panel O and of the UoA 67 (Music) sub-panel have been invited to participate in that conference, and both have accepted. I am meeting with them again in late February to work out how they can contribute with profit to the conference. If colleagues have any views on this, I would be very pleased to receive them (m.everist@soton.ac.uk).

In the February 2005 *Newsletter*, I outlined NAMHE's intentions to develop links with cognate subject associations, and to date we have established links with the Standing Conference on University Drama Departments (SCUDD), the Standing Conference on Dance in Higher Education (SCoDHE) and the Association of Art Historians (AAH). Representatives from the first two will be attending NAMHE committee meetings during the coming year. In the light of our 2005 conference on the transition from school to higher education, we have also established contact with the National Association of Music Educators (NAME) whose new chair, Professor Sarah Hennessy will be meeting the NAMHE committee in January 2006. I opened up formal discussions with Conservatoires UK at a useful meeting early in the Summer, and NAMHE looks forward to continuing to work closely with them. Relations with the RMA remain strong, largely as a result of significant cross-membership between the RMA council and NAMHE's national committee.

Looking at the membership figures for NAMHE is at the same time a satisfying and disquieting exercise: satisfying to see that almost all the major university departments and conservatoires are fully-subscribed members of the association, and therefore that NAMHE represents a very large proportion indeed of the music HE community in the UK; disquieting because of the concern that very small groups of teachers and researchers in music – usually within larger academic groupings – have found it difficult to justify membership of NAMHE on grounds of cost. We have therefore agreed a differentiated level of subscription for institutions (outlined elsewhere in this *Newsletter*) that I hope will encourage those smaller groups to subscribe and to put up candidates for membership of the committee. NAMHE is committed to supporting *all* music staff in higher education whether they work in the largest or the smallest groupings.

Also elsewhere in this *Newsletter* is an introduction to NAMHE's new web site. This is an appropriate moment to thank Geoff Smith, the committee member who has masterminded and engineered this new site of which we can all be extremely proud: it is an important national face for the Association and for music in higher education in general, as well as an important resource for the discipline. Equipped with our own namhe.ac.uk domain name, we say farewell to PALATINE who hosted the old website, and I would like ▶

Dr Dai Griffiths (Oxford Brookes University) continued the theme of music literacy in his presentation 'Can Undergraduate Music Students Read Music - and Does it Matter? A Report on Recent Teaching and Questionnaire Responses.' His findings, based on a module teaching basic notation and harmony, revealed that what might have been taken for granted in terms of prior knowledge needed review. Politically, Griffiths followed the logic that mass education means that what was once assumed to be basic material is now covered at a 'higher' level but if basic harmony is covered in the first year at university then there is the problem of who teaches it when staff are under constant pressure to produce high level research. Potentially there is a big funding problem because it requires a great deal of staff time.

Griffiths expressed greater concern over the fate of music history than the state of contemporary composition: in the context of an 'art school' view at Brookes, allied with music technology, genuinely interesting work is produced. He proposed that the debate should start by insisting that covering music 'pre 1900' is a good thing. He had observed that there were at least two kinds of 'relativist' arguments at play: 'popular music relativism (people in bands don't have to read the dots) and modernist relativism (the past matters *because* it sets up a certain mode of composition), the consequence of which is an 'evacuation' of basic knowledge in theory and harmony.' He noted that whereas fifteen years ago the issue was one of making sure gender and race were properly covered in the curriculum, the battle now seems to be trying to make sure that music history, mainly 'classical' music, is not restricted to an 'elite'.

A useful outcome for the conference was Griffiths' proposal that Music revisits its Benchmark Statement, perhaps with a view to 'firming up' exactly what music undergraduate courses are intended to have covered in terms of basic theory and tonal harmony.

Overall the conference created an initial and crucial forum for bringing together a wide range of experiences and opinions from what were confirmed to be disparate levels within our music education system. Although the conference set out to focus on the transition from secondary to higher education, the tension that was revealed between political issues and the subject of what the study of music should actually comprise, extended to all levels of education. This has reinforced the need to generate and sustain communication channels between examination boards, education authorities and those who design curricula for GCSE, 'A' level and degrees in Music.

Credit to Piers Hellawell for exposing such critical and contentious issues within music education in the UK.

Dr Amanda Bayley,  
Secretary NAMHE, University of Wolverhampton

## Summary of the Committee meeting Held on 26 February 2005, at the University of Birmingham

Dr Lyn Davies was welcomed to his first meeting as co-opted member for Wales.

The Chair thanked everyone who had contributed to the response to the AHRB on the Top Ten Journals project. NAMHE's input had clearly had a powerful effect and its involvement had been mentioned in the THES's front page report.

The main focus of the meeting was preparation for the 2005 Conference at Southampton on Tuesday 3 May. Future conferences were confirmed for the first Tuesday in May in Wolverhampton (2006) and Belfast (2007).

There was a discussion about NAMHE's publicity. Dr (now Professor) Geoff Smith presented a proposal to develop a web site, which was approved, and a company called *Float* selected to design both the new web site and a logo for NAMHE. The challenge of raising awareness of NAMHE and its activities was also discussed and it was agreed to take a more proactive approach in encouraging non-members to join and pointing out the advantages to them of doing so.

The Chair noted his concern that NAMHE had not been able to contribute to the selection of the Centres of Excellence for Learning & Teaching. It was recognised that there was sometimes a delay in disseminating HEFCE documents in larger institutions and it was agreed that Dr Darla Crispin would take responsibility for alerting committee members to current circulars, given that management structures in the conservatoires were slimmer. This policy has proved very fruitful since the meeting. The Association had however been invited by the AHRB to provide a subject response to two papers: Review of Resource Enhancement Scheme and Consultation on non-responsive research funding. The Research Sub-Committee was asked to respond.

## Summary of the Committee meeting held on 4 June 2005, at the University of Birmingham

[Minutes of this meeting are not yet confirmed]

The Committee considered a discussion paper prepared by Professor Jan Smaczny, which outlined the issues that had arisen at the Conference on 3 May. It was agreed that HE Music needed to decide on its objectives in its relations with school music and that a proactive approach would be made to the Chair-Elect of NAME. It was suggested that ▶

linked to the performance and composition of music in the Western tradition. He justified the status of Grade 8 theory as a well-established benchmark that is criterion-referenced (unlike 'A' levels that have an element of norm-referencing) and accredited by QCA. He listed the areas of knowledge covered by Grade 8 theory and distributed sample papers amongst audience members, explaining the purpose of the questions and associated marking criteria.

Scaife outlined the process by which UCAS points were established in order to reflect a wider range of qualifications and to embrace the reforms to post-16 education within Curriculum 2000. In order for GMEs (Graded Music Exams) to be listed there was a process of comparison with 'A' level Music and a task group was set up to determine the size of each of the practical and theory grades 6-8 in relation to 'A' level; to calibrate the three levels of achievement (Pass, Merit, Distinction) against the 5 A-E grades of 'A' level; and to allocate Tariff points to each of grades 6-8. It was agreed that a Merit at Grade 7 was equivalent to slightly more than an A grade at 'A' level and that a pass at Grade 6 should be aligned with a C grade at 'A' level. Grade 8 with Distinction counts as 75 UCAS points, Grade 6 with Distinction, 45 UCAS points and Grade 8 Theory with Distinction, 30 UCAS points. The Theory grades seemed to be set at a low level but Scaife explained that this was due to the extent of overlap with the current content of 'A' level music, which will be reduced with new 'A' level syllabi.

In terms of curriculum content, an observation was made that the Grade 8 theory paper was no different from an AS level paper. Scaife's presentation rekindled concerns about restricting rather than widening the curriculum to which he responded that there was still an ongoing internal debate about the jazz syllabus since theoretical understanding is demonstrated through performance. There was nevertheless an overriding feeling that although students were expected to be equipped with these specialist skills, in reality universities should be, and are, accepting a wider range of applicants. Scaife's report on the Framework for Achievement should have helped to allay fears of elitism as it is designed to replace the National Qualifications Framework by 2010. Although still at a consultative stage, QCA is committed to establishing the Framework for Achievement from January 2006. It has been set up to recognize achievements that take place in community-based provision, employer-based training, e-learning programmes and commercial training organizations. It will rely on a common bank of units, each with a credit allocation, the intention being to simplify and rationalise qualifications by reducing duplication.

Ewan Hainey (Academic Registrar, Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama) provided an outline of the new UK Conservatoires Admissions Service, CUKAS, which was launched the week after the conference for 2006-07 applicants. Conservatoires UK includes seven institutions: the

Birmingham Conservatoire, Leeds College of Music, the Royal College of Music, the Royal Northern College of Music, the Royal Scottish Academy of Music and Drama, the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama and Trinity College of Music. Hainey elaborated on the way that CUKAS offers a different and more flexible admissions system compared with the way the university sector operates. Admission to most UK conservatoires has traditionally been via application to individual colleges, each with their own requirements and timescale. The new CUKAS system enables applicants to create a single electronic application that can be submitted simultaneously to up to six conservatoires. It is the first admissions service to be fully electronic, its creation being the desire to attract a broader base of applicants by increasing accessibility to advanced musical training. Students could potentially apply for 12 HE places at 6 colleges and 6 universities which would need to be coordinated in the following August. The advantages of the new system means that candidates can check the progress of their applications, accept offers and confirm decisions online. They can also work on their online application at any time with their unique ID and password. No explanation was offered concerning those institutions not included in the new admissions system.

Returning to the university sector, Dr Mathew Adkins (University of Huddersfield) considered 'The Changing Skillset of the Contemporary Musician' by focusing on music technology courses and the curriculum at Huddersfield. The fact that some of the students applying to the courses have either limited or no ability to read traditional music notation necessitated the teaching of 'remedial' theory modules and stimulated a debate as to what can realistically be taught at university level for these students to 'catch up'. The other side of the debate has questioned this need to 'catch up' altogether. Adkins explained how notation and theory were alien to music technology students because they use non-traditional materials and therefore acquire non-traditional music skills. He gave several examples of the kind of work that music technology students produced and identified pieces that were created using no traditional notation skills because they rely on graphic user interfaces and a high level of technological input to produce music. Dance music has turned into an aural culture therefore students need an acute ear and good improvisational skills rather than good notation skills. The importance of being able to create ideas and construct music in a linear fashion led to the Introduction to Music Theory module being included in the course but Adkins also made a case for imagination being the essence of electronic music. This alternative way of thinking about sound materials has after all been with us for over fifty years since *musique concrète* was pioneered by Pierre Henry Schaeffer. The justification of different skillsets was made even clearer once Adkins compared the destination of music technology graduates who would invariably gain jobs in industry, compared with music graduates who would often be employed as teachers. ▶

to thank Lisa Whistlecroft and her colleagues for their help over the years in maintaining the old site.

Many colleagues attended the NAMHE annual conference 'Foundations of University Music: From Secondary to Higher Education' in Southampton last May, and came away with much to think about. We have a review of the conference published in this *Newsletter*, and this helps to provide a focus, I think, on the way in which we conceptualize music as a subject in higher education, and the difficulties faced by a subject that is – in almost every institution in the country – one of the smallest disciplinary groupings, and always a possible victim of such richer (although *arriviste*) disciplines as engineering or nursing (one might, and not entirely in jest, remember music's medieval pedigree as a university subject). NAMHE has an important role to play in helping music departments and other groupings survive the vicissitudes of the English higher education establishment in the twenty-first century as exemplified by constant managerial realignments, restructurings and – as the title of our conference suggests – the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise.

Professor Mark Everist  
Chair, National Association for Music in Higher Education (NAMHE)

## Report on NAMHE Annual Conference May 2005

Annual Conference, 3 May 2005  
University of Southampton

### Foundations of University Music: From Secondary to Higher Education

The topic of this year's conference was the inspiration of Prof. Piers Hellawell (Professor in Composition at Queen's University, Belfast) who raised concerns with NAMHE about the training foundation for students exploring composition at university level. In his keynote address, 'Schoenberg's Swiss Cheese: a Learning Full of Holes', he set the agenda for the day by raising concerns about the content of GCSE and 'A' level syllabi and the detrimental effect of the 'league-table culture' on the application of syllabus materials. It had been made known to Hellawell that one representative of GCSE/'A' level providers declared that if a student achieved grade A at 'A' level without knowledge of the bass clef that was 'great – he wasn't burdened with knowledge' because such a 'burden of knowledge' could 'stifle a student's creativity'. One teacher known to Hellawell had also reported that she had recently been warned by a senior official not to scare students by

talking about composers and composing music. Outraged by such comments Hellawell initiated a meeting with his local GCSE/'A' Level board whose syllabus he had come to see as part of the freefall in musical literacy and historical awareness. A topsy-turvy strategy emerged from the meeting whereby GCSE was regarded as a hook: if students could be attracted to GCSE and their interests maintained, then teachers could try to teach them something at 'A' level.

Hellawell identified a range of skills that are missing from GCSE and 'A' level composition: students are not connecting what they write with instrumental realities because they are not taught about their properties, ranges and techniques; the basic layout of a score would be presumed to be fundamental yet the score is no longer regarded by students other than a source of puzzlement and fear; the basic mechanisms of functional harmony have disappeared. Despite their 'tonal' pop surroundings, there is no tonal training even though A2 claims to 'develop knowledge and understanding of functional harmony'. There is no sense of historical context: a progression of ideas is lost through a syllabus of isolated 'topics'. Musical style is trivialised by a supermarket range of styles and subsequently there is no distinction between pastiche and assimilation. Worse still is the syllabus portraying 'music as an emotive vehicle' where music is relegated to a vehicle for addressing issues such as 'the environment'.

Although training *does* survive in the advice of GCSE Guidance Documents Hellawell argued that it is lost due to the pressure on teachers for grade A results. He called for some recognition that art is not about guaranteed results. Mass-production of the 'right' product is not composition. The metric for success is perceived to be recruitment but Hellawell questioned why there had to be such a gulf between education and participation, why they had to oppose rather than complement each other. He argued that students at any level need to be equipped with the power to control the materials they use. In no other field would the basic tools for training be denigrated in this way: 'training is the *access* that lasts'. At the very least, Hellawell proposed that there needed to be some agreement from all sides that there is a problem and then it can be decided what can be done about it.

In support of Hellawell's observations, one striking comment came from a lecturer and 'A' level examiner regarding the lack of discussion between GCSE and 'A' level over syllabus content. Each level works independently of the other leading to the unsatisfactory consequence of the 'A' level having to respond to GCSE.

The issue of widening participation was the focus of Prof. Lucy Green's (Professor of Music Education, Institute of Education) presentation. Although billed as 'Music at 14+', she veered towards the *pre-14+* curriculum as the years which supposedly lay the foundations for GCSE. ▶

Green's solution to the problem of participation and inclusivity emerged from examination of informal learning practices in her current research into year 9 children (13-year-olds). She pointed out that although popular music has been in the school curriculum for 30 years the actual learning strategies of popular musicians in the informal realm have been largely missing. Her large-scale research project was funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation in partnership with Hertfordshire Music Service. The pilot project was funded by the Esme Fairbairn Foundation in partnership with the London Borough of Ealing and lasted 3-6 weeks, the aim being to reflect the characteristics of informal learning. These were

- pupils choosing their own music
- learning by copying recordings
- learning in friendship groups
- learning without adult guidance.

The results of Green's research suggested that informal learning practices in classrooms seem likely to increase inclusion in the music curriculum and enhance knowledge and skills which would be better preparation for GCSE/'A' level in different ways from the current curriculum. Informal learning practices tend to involve a particularly deep integration of listening, performing, improvising and composing throughout the learning process, with an emphasis on personal creativity, as distinct from the increasing differentiation of skills, and emphasis on reproduction in the formal realm. Green argued that widening participation does not *necessarily* imply a disjunction in the school to university transition. The disjunction arises from too much diversity, not enough specialisation, and lack of time, rather than from the nature of the approach. Green subsequently proposed that we need to use our time in more specialised ways that are realistic about how people learn music, ideally through conversations between NAMHE, NAME (National Association of Music Educators), OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) and QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority).

One response from the floor commented that there was a danger of invading the culture of those whom teachers are trying to teach but Green said there was no evidence to suggest that. Another delegate questioned the equipment generally available in schools since in Green's case the project had paid for the instruments. Green's response was that £1500 was better spent on real materials for music-making rather than a whiteboard or computer. There was surprise at children choosing their own styles but Green informed the audience that the third term of the project would include music with which the children would *not* be familiar and she hoped that their ears would open out.

Focusing on school teachers rather than pupils, Alison Timms (Director of Music at an Independent School in Birmingham)

turned the conference agenda around suggesting that university music departments need to review their music education provision. She presented a view of music education in secondary schools from the chalk face: 'A level Music – Preparation or Merely Conclusion?' identifying a number of hurdles that needed to be overcome. She provided a historical context for the current curriculum from primary to secondary school level and defended secondary school music against the recent bad press it had received which had criticised its limitations. She claimed that the majority of secondary music educators *are* content with the National Curriculum in music.

Timms' slant on inclusivity was through traditional learning and teaching qualities, as expressed in the National Curriculum in the late eighties: 'Music should provide *all* pupils with opportunities'. She commented that in the best primary schools many children are music readers, their knowledge frequently supported by extra-curricular music - a majority of them receiving instrumental lessons which depend on financial support from headteachers and parents. She argued that children are being given a grounding in musical literacy and the Western classical tradition, as that is what is most familiar and important to over 90% of music teachers in schools today, and that is what schemes of work, resource materials and textbooks mostly refer to. She had witnessed the most negative pupils being introduced to the world of classical music via workshops, concert visits and lively presentations. Music on the television can also help to promote universal perception; for example, 'Nessun Dorma' at the football world cup. However, Timms also highlighted a shift towards a multicultural curriculum in which classical music no longer occupies a privileged position. The compulsory inclusion of technology in music teaching has also invited more interest in the subject resulting in more highly motivated pupils.

While it is easy to question whether 'A' level standards are being maintained Timms assured her audience that although more pupils *are* passing the Advanced level examination, more children are now eligible to select the course. From her own experiences (teaching in grammar, comprehensive and independent schools and as an examiner), government intervention has raised educational standards and the introduction of a systematic programme has enabled many more children to progress in and enjoy music at a higher level.

A challenging scenario emerged from the discussions following Timms' presentation where a tabla student would clearly possess a variety of musical skills but none appropriate for A level music. Dr Julian Johnson's (Lecturer at St. Anne's College, Oxford) subtitle, 'Smooth Progress or Bad Fit?' was clearly as applicable to the discussions preceding his presentation as it was to the presentation itself. Extending his own question from the title of his talk, 'What Do Universities Want?' Johnson asked how well that fits with what school pupils do at 'A' level. He spoke from

personal experience about the new challenges facing universities and returned to Hellawell's concern, commenting that the gap between schools and universities might be more serious than we think because, he believes, it stems from a confusion – or lack of consensus at least – about what studying music is. This lack of consensus had indeed emerged from the contrasting perspectives of the previous speakers. Johnson's identification of the problem had arisen from interviewing prospective degree students who were unable to think critically about music.

More perplexing still, was the apparent ability of the same students to demonstrate considerable critical acumen in their essays for History or English 'A' levels which they could not transfer to music analysis or music history. Johnson asked 'What is it about our discipline and the way we teach it, that reduces the subject to rather lifeless formulae and packages of information that do not invite critical reflection of argument?'. To think critically about music one needs to understand it from the inside. The evidence suggests that students with little prior training in harmony and counterpoint inevitably find analysis harder going: it becomes atomistic labelling, lifeless, not a way of understanding musical process. Johnson perceived the teaching of music history at 'A' level to be similarly atomistic in approach: a list of features with no understanding of how one relates to the other, of why they might be different, of what it means that one is different from the other. It does not seem embedded in any broader view that might place and make sense of the individual parts. And without any awareness, Johnson concluded, students are not able to engage critically. He welcomed a plurality of approaches but advised that they need to be spelt out more. He proposed the idea of degrees in Musicology, perhaps combined with Performance or Composition, or degrees in The Sociology of Music observing that 'the protean nature of our subject – *iMusic!* – is both its strength and curse'.

Dr Stephanie Pitts (University of Sheffield) provided empirical evidence on 'Becoming a Music Student: Understanding the Transition from School to University'. She outlined the methods and key findings of a PALATINE-funded project which aimed to introduce and monitor students' existing levels of adaptability to university study through a new study skills module at the University of Sheffield. The project served a dual teaching and research function, bridging the divide between lecturers' assumptions about students' abilities and the reality of adjusting to life in an academic music department.

Students participated in fortnightly meetings during the Autumn semester 2004, completing tasks designed to encourage the self-evaluation of skills including critical reading, writing and research, organisation and time management, and self-assessment. Changing attitudes and expectations during the critical first term at university were

measured through a series of questionnaires which invited students to reflect on their readiness for university study and their expectations and experiences of becoming a music student. There was a problem of decreasing response rates as the inclination to get up for a nine o'clock lecture waned during the semester! Nonetheless, the questionnaire responses provided some useful statistical overviews as well as some qualitative data which helped to explain and illustrate the experiences of the students across the first semester, involving self-perception, self-evaluation and self-identity. The results showed peaks and dips in confidence/anxiety levels which could be related to workload, reading week, etc. The balance between performance and academic study also changed from their initial expectations and throughout the semester. Since involvement in performing was a familiar activity to students before entering university the impact was less than for academic study where they would be introduced to new subject areas as well as a higher standard of essay-writing being required of them. This evidence would also support the weak essay-writing skills in music students that Johnson had observed. Pitts accepted that, unfortunately, the data does not automatically generate solutions but it does offer an empirical basis for decisions about what kinds of teaching and learning provision will be beneficial for students both at university and *in preparation for* university.

For anyone who had reservations about research of this kind, Pitts pointed out that it does not mean being entirely led in teaching decisions by student experiences and demands: the module illustrated that students judged some of their own needs inaccurately. Subsequent discussion centred on student expectations and how this relates to what they learn. Poor careers advice was highlighted as a problem for students contemplating music at degree level because they were often led to believe that they would simply be playing their instrument for three years.

Representing the conventional route into music in higher education, Nigel Scaife, (Syllabus Principal at the ABRSM) clarified the context of 'The Associated Board's Grade 8, UCAS and the Framework for Achievement'. The AB's graded exams were accredited within the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) in 2000 and two years later they were admitted to the UCAS Tariff. Scaife posed two questions:

1. How useful are Associated Board exams both in preparing students for music degree courses, and in acting as benchmarks of achievement for university admissions tutors?
2. How will the move towards a unitised 'Framework for Achievement' impact on higher education?

Scaife felt the distinction between 'theory' and 'practice' was not always helpful because theory is inextricably